

With that, I would offer to you the committee amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Senator Johnson. Senator Jerry Miller.

SENATOR MILLER: We are still discussing the committee amendments, right, Mr. Speaker?

SPEAKER BARRETT: On the committee amendments, that is correct.

SENATOR MILLER: That last speech was not a closure, right? So that the body knows what we are talking about, the committee amendments, let me reiterate what Senator Johnson said, one is that you take the cigarette tax from.... Pull out your committee amendment, if you have it in front of you, and go over it with me because the committee amendment increases the taxes. We have a window of opportunity here to do that. If you pull out your committee amendment, or the bill, it says, number one, that you strike 26 cents and put 27 cents in there, an additional cent. I'm reading Section 7, on line 18 of your committee amendment. It also adjusts the rate down that the wholesalers would get, from stamping those cigarettes, of approximately 4 percent down to 3.4 percent. They will get the same amount of monies, but they will not get the windfall of the increase of the cigarette sales tax, and they will have a small additional percentage because they will be handling more money. Probably the most important part is the fact that if you look in the bill you will see that there is an amount equal to, we are raising from 10 to 15 percent tax on smokeless tobacco. I would encourage you to take a look and understand the committee amendments in relation to the bill. If you are not in favor of the bill, you can vote the bill down. This is not one of those situations where you would vote the committee amendments down to weaken the bill. This is a situation where you should have a good bill and then either vote it up or down.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Rod Johnson on the committee amendments, followed by Senator Schmit.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members, a very brief question for Senator Vard Johnson.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Vard.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes, Rod.